

Introduction



The 2009 VLAP Sampling Season

The Volunteer Lake Assessment Program (VLAP) set a new participation record for the third straight season. A total of 178 lakes were sampled, 2 new lakes joined the program, and approximately 500 volunteer monitors participated in the VLAP!

We extend a special welcome to the volunteer monitoring groups that joined VLAP for the first time this year. These volunteers represent the following waterbodies: Kimball Pond, Canterbury; and Walker Pond, Boscawen.

And, we welcome back our friends and new monitors at Sawyer Lake, Gilmanton; and Wilson Pond, Swanzey who rejoined VLAP during the 2009 season.

2009 Weather Conditions in New Hampshire

The 2009 sampling season was marked by cool temperatures and above average wetfall. According to the National Weather Service climate data, May was colder and wetter (3.96 inches of rain in Concord, NH) than normal; June was colder and much wetter (10th wettest June on record and double the normal rainfall for Concord, NH); July set records for cold and wet weather (9th coldest and 6th wettest July on record for Concord, NH); August was slightly warmer but wetter (over four inches of rain and nearly one inch above normal in Concord, NH); and September was colder and much drier (13th driest September on record for Concord, NH). Overall, 23 inches of rain fell from May through September, making it the 4th wettest summer on record (past 140 years) for Concord, NH. Also note that 2008 was the 8th wettest summer and 2006 was the 7th wettest summer on record. Is this a lasting phenomenon?

The rainy 2009 season increased nutrient loading to many lakes and ponds. The wet conditions likely led to increased plant, algal and bacterial growth. However the decreased sunlight and cooler water temperatures may have kept overly abundant plant and algal growth at bay. The increased stormwater runoff volumes likely elevated turbidity, decreased water clarity, and increased phosphorus.

Stormwater runoff also provided the nutrients required for accelerated cyanobacteria growth. Fourteen VLAP lakes experienced cyanobacteria bloom conditions that resulted in public beach advisories or health warnings to lake residents.

2009 Program Updates

Plymouth State University's (PSU) VLAP Satellite Laboratory lost its Lab Managers and operated at a diminished capacity this season. However a new Lab Manager, Aaron Johnson, has been hired and we anticipate the lab to be fully operational next season. We welcome Aaron into this challenging role and look forward to working with him in the future. Feel free to stop by and say hello to Aaron this winter and spring.

VLAP will continue work on a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The grant is targeted for the North Country to increase program partici-

pation and volunteer monitoring for VLAP, VRAP and Weed Watchers (VLAP's sister programs). Volunteer monitoring groups located in the North Country can expect easy access to monitoring equipment and sample bottles. Also, please look for upcoming educational and outreach initiatives targeted at the North Country.

2009 Report Updates

Appendix B (Data Tables) in the Biennial Reports has undergone a minor change. The first page of a data table will include the Table Number, Lake Name, Town, and Table Description in the header. Subsequent pages will not include this information, however the footer will indicate the table number and page number. For example: 1-1, 1-2, 1-3 corresponds to table 1 page 1, table 1 page 2, and table 1 page 3.

Concluding Remarks

Carerfully read the "Observations and Recommendations" and "Data Quality Assessment and Quality Control" sections of your report, and *pay special attention to our recommendations* to improve lake quality and the current sampling program. These suggestions provide a mechanism to identify watershed pollution sources and develop management plans to reduce pollutant loads and improve water quality. Please take advantage of these important recommendations. Also, if a stream survey was recommended, please contact the VLAP Coordinator in the spring to schedule a survey before the busy summer sampling season.

This year's Special Topic Article "**Lake Drawdown: Friend or Foe**" is found in Appendix C of the Interim Report and Appendix D of the Biennial Report. This will provide you with a useful tool to evaluate the pros and cons to lake drawdowns along with the DES Fact Sheets *Lake Drawdowns for Weed Control* and *Why Lake Drawdowns are Conducted*. Please share the information with your neighbors and town officials.

We realize that a vast amount of important information is presented in the following report. If you have any questions regarding your 2009 report, please feel free to contact us. And finally, please contact the VLAP Coordinator this spring to schedule the annual biologist visit, stream survey or site walk, or to schedule a summer lake association meeting speaker.

Sincerely,

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